

The Don'ts of Law School Interviews

Interviewing is a universal law school experience. Fortunately, you can develop and refine your interviewing skills with practice. Whether you're navigating OCI or looking to land your dream job, the following DON'Ts can help you avoid common pitfalls in preparation for and during your interview.



DON'T forget to thoroughly research the firm, agency, or organization.



Part of being able to explain why you want to work for this firm is understanding its identity, strengths, and strategy, as well as what makes it unique from similar firms. You should have knowledge of the firm's practice areas, recent cases, and major clients.



DON'T forget to do your market research.



Your interview should demonstrate your awareness of the legal market and your commercial acumen.



DON'T forget to prepare for competency-based questions.



Dissect the job description skill-by-skill, qualification-by-qualification, and prepare for questions based on these competencies. You should have a bank of examples to draw from that highlight the competencies and experiences required in the role.



DON'T forget that the interview panel will have read your application prior to the interview.



Some of the questions you will be asked will come directly from the information provided in your application. This is your opportunity to build on this information by explaining why your previous experiences make you uniquely qualified for the role.



DON'T talk about current or former employers or experiences negatively.



All experiences should be framed positively as learning opportunities. Your professionalism should be on full display throughout your interview.



DON'T underestimate the value of mock interviews.



Interview prep helps alleviate nerves and enables you to come across as competent and composed. Whether in person or on Zoom, simulating the interview structure and environment during mock interviews will provide greater ease during the actual interview.

Is that what I look like on Zoom? How long have I been talking for? What even is my greatest strength? Remove the intangibles that make interviews daunting by becoming as familiar as possible with the environment and your responses to potential questions. Preparation is what you have greatest control over in interviews.



DON'T ramble and don't rush.



Take a second to organize your thoughts. Just as important as the substantive answers you provide are the listening and communication skills you demonstrate throughout your interview.

Consider using the STAR (Situation, Task, Action, Result) method to organize your responses to competency-based questions.



DON'T forget that an interview is a two-way process.



This is likely your most meaningful opportunity to learn about the role and the firm. Towards the end of the interview, you'll likely have a chance to ask any questions you have. This is an opportunity for you to further demonstrate your knowledge of the firm and role by asking meaningful, substantive questions that came up during your interview prep.

Your questions should be substantive and tailored to the interview panel. The time to ask logistical and/or administrative questions is typically not during the interview.



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